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AUTHOR Laird, David B., Jr.
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ABSTRACT

Included in this essay is a historical review of Federal policy and practice in Indian education from 1500 to 1970. The earliest period, the missionary period, is representative of the religious zeal of the 16th and 17th centuries wherein the missionaries had as their responsibility the education of the Indian--including the dual effort of civilizing and Christianizing. The next period, from 1794 to 1871, is known as the treaty period wherein the fundamental policy was to dispossess the Indian from his land to allow for White expansion; there is agreement that, during this period, Federal educational policy was a function of the land policy since the goals of education were to convince the Indian to give up the land and move to a farm-based economy. The third period, from 1865 to 1870, found the solution to education in assimilation, and the educational efforts were directed to this end. In 1871, the treaty period was ended by Federal legislation, and the military-type boarding school was developed to provide training for the Indian's emergence into the White culture. The next period, from 1933 to 1945, brought changes in Indian education such as giving the Indians a larger role in the education of their children and providing day schools for two-thirds of the children. From 1945 to present, numerous bills passed by Congress have both hindered and helped Indian education; however, the termination policy has caused the Indians to remain static because of their suspicion of the Government's intent, thus making it difficult for legislation such as the Economic Opportunity Act to have the hoped-for impact. (LS)

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DE-INDIANIZING THE AMERICAN INDIAN:

AN ESSAY ON THE EDUCATION OF

THE AMERICAN INDIAN

by

David B. Laird, Jr.

Department of Social Foundations
School of Education
The University of Michigan
September, 1970

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION. 1

PART I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 6

PART II. THE ASSUMPTION OF FEDERAL RESPONSIBILITY 16

PART III. THE CONTEMPORARY SITUATION—1970 36

PART IV. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS 43

RECOMMENDED SOURCES. 47

However, if I had waited long enough I probably never would have written anything at all since there is a tendency when you really begin to learn something about a thing not to want to write about it, but rather to keep on learning about it always and at no time, unless you are very egotistical, which of course, accounts for many books, will you be able to say: Now I know all about this and will write about it.

Ernest Hemingway:
Death in the Afternoon

INTRODUCTION

A serious personal interest in American Indian affairs was a direct result of participation in a seminar in 1969, in which two members of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribes and a returning VISTA volunteer were serving as resource personnel. The discussions were enlightening, positions divergent, and the total experience challenging.

One of the Mohawks, a young man in his early twenties, was embroiled in a legal battle with the U. S. Army as a result of his contention that his nation (the Iroquois Nation) was not at war and he was, therefore, under no obligation to serve in the armed forces. He was also one of a few young braves who were agitating for a return to the longhouse theocracy on the reservation and this movement was as unpopular with some of the Mohawk elders as with the local government agents.

The second Mohawk, a man of late forties, was highly aroused by the movement to revive the longhouse heritage. He was educated in a Catholic mission school, had gone on to complete a Ph.D. at an Ivy League university and had returned to the area to work in the public school system. He had long ago embraced the Whiteman's culture and saw this as the only route for his fellow tribesmen to take toward success and salvation. The idea of returning to native customs was considered by him to be an unnecessary and damaging regression.

The VISTA volunteer was a widow in her sixties, who had served

in an educational facility on an Indian reservation in the southwest. She was embued with a fervor that approached religiosity and was convinced that she had served with a staff (nearly all white) that had discovered the "right" answers to the educational problems of American Indians.

The interchange with these three individuals was spirited and enjoyable, but far more importantly it highlighted some of the contemporary Indian problems and provided insight into the diversity of opinion and belief among the Indians and those who work "with" them.

In the year following these discussions, I have read and hopefully digested a portion of the literature devoted to American Indian affairs and have occasionally been privileged to question some of those who have been directly or indirectly involved in the area. This reading and personal contact has provided the interest, curiosity and concern which form the basis of this essay.

I believe the century of federal responsibility for American Indian education (1870-1970) is an emphatic testament to the complexities and dangers inherent in the national control of an educational system. At a time when some are advocating greater federal financial involvement in public schools in the United States, I think we should pay critical attention to the federal record in Indian education. How responsive has the system been to local needs? To what extent have national political considerations overshadowed the educational needs of Indian children? How successful has the system been in establishing and attaining national goals? To what extent have Indians been involved in the determination of goals and policy? And finally, to what extent has an uncontrollable bureaucracy developed which

resists change and improvement?

To be sure, these questions are not easily or simply answered, but I submit that the evidence is weighted heavily against the success of the national educational program for Indians and might well be reviewed prior to embarking on a similar or parallel program, whatever the target group.

Furthermore, a study of how the United States had dealt with American Indians provides a basis for future analysis and comparison with the other nations that have dealt with cultural minorities. Of particular interest personally are the futures of the American Indians in Canada, the aboriginal tribes of Australia, the various trust territories of the United Nations and the Indians of South and Central America.

There has been a great deal of recent interest in what are variously described as culturally disadvantaged and deprived minorities. These terms have become so frequent in their usage that one is nearly led to the belief that a person or group in the United States not nurtured in the white culture has developed in a cultural vacuum or at best a valueless subculture. It is my hope that this essay will reflect the range and degree of the effort of the dominant culture to suppress and eradicate once flourishing Indian cultures. Perhaps a better understanding of the applicability of "disadvantaged" and "deprived" will result.

There has been, to my knowledge, no consistent pattern of defining the term Indian since 1492 when Columbus and his men were deluded in thinking they had landed in the East Indies. From the time the Spanish conquistadores discovered cultural and tribal differences among the inhabitants of the Americas, the term Indian has been outmoded, but a replacement has not been adopted. Clear definition of native

Americans has been further complicated by the intermingling of races over nearly 500 years.

The present situation in the United States is such that the term Indian is applied according to several criteria including blood percentage, ancestry, residence and self-identification. The criteria used vary among the many organizations, agencies and people serving with and for Indians.

For the purposes of this essay, I have included the following criteria in defining an Indian or Indians:

1. Any individual who considers himself or is considered by others an Indian.

2. Any individual, some of whose ancestors lived in America prior to its discovery by Europeans.

3. Any individual defined by federal or state law as Indian.

In reviewing the interaction of individuals and groups with the Indians and their cultures, it is most helpful to have a general term to define the non-Indian involved in the interaction. To define the most prevalent non-Indian I have found it convenient to use either White or Whiteman and have incorporated for this purpose the definition applied by the noted anthropologist Peter Farb. He defines the Whiteman as the "colonizer who early developed an advanced technology; he is an exploiter of human and natural resources; he has destroyed, often intentionally, almost every alien culture he has come in contact with; and he has imposed an iron rule on the remnant peoples of these cultures."[1]

There is a need in this topic area (Indian Education) to make distinctions among the terms education, school, socialization (or

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[1]Peter Farb, Man's Rise to Civilization as Shown by the Indians of North America from Primeval Times to the Coming of the Industrial State (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co. Inc., 1968), pp. 5-6.

civilization) and indoctrination, for all apply to the experience of American Indians since 1870. However, I have found it too unwieldy to make these distinctions in this essay especially in view of the fact that the principal federal policy for Indian Affairs has been coercive assimilation, thus incorporating all of these terms and implied activities. The task of distinguishing among the terms is further inhibited by the fact that the vast majority of literature regarding the educational experiences of American Indians makes little distinction among the terms. The challenge awaits some future sensitive and scholarly treatment.

It is this background and framework from which I have explored a century of federal policy and practice in American Indian education.

> The more I contemplate the difference between civilized and uncivilized man with regard to the principles of justice, the more I observe that the former contests the foundations of those rights, which the latter simply violates.
>
> Alexis de Tocqueville: Democracy in America

Part I. Historical Background

Nearly four centuries of interaction with American Indians preceded the assumption of full responsibility for Indian Affairs by the United States Government in 1871. These four centuries were the formative period for the relations between the Whiteman and the Indians. To a substantial degree the problems encountered under federal control (1870-1970) could be traced in their development to the preceding centuries of interaction. This is not to suggest, however, that the federal government has not been the source of some of the problems encountered in Indian Affairs during the century of federal control.

The Spanish in the Rio Grande Valley (1530) and the British in Jamestown (1607) established the first settlements on the North American continent and were followed by the French in the St. Lawrence River system. Initial intercourse with the Indians was concentrated in trading or missionary activity, both of which led to significant changes in the way of life of the Indians.

The explorers, conquerors, and settlers from the Iberian Peninsula and Europe had difficulty categorizing the Indians according to their theological, philosophical and economic doctrines. The

Spanish, in fact, went so far as to request a clarification of Indian status from the King and the Pope. Two schools of thought emerged from the questioning: one viewed the Indian as fulfilling the philosophic ideal of the Noble Savage; the other was generally inclined to view the Indians as a bloodthirsty inferior race.

Among the colonists of North America the latter view appears to have been more widespread in practice and belief. The transition from this view to the responsibility to "civilize" the Indian was not a difficult one in view of the economic and political needs of the early settlements.

Christian missionaries were very active in North America throughout the colonial period. Representative of the religious zeal of the 16th and 17th centuries, they assumed the responsibility to Christianize the heathen savages. It is of importance to note that there was considerable competition among the divisions and sects of Christianity in the pursuit of this responsibility and the Indians were often innocently victimized.

Thus the assumed responsibilities to civilize and Christianize the Indians became the foundation of early efforts. The effects on some Indians were immediate and substantial, while other Indians appear to have escaped the effects, usually by moving beyond the colonial frontiers.

In reading the literature about the arrival of the Whiteman in North America, I have found no evidence to dispute Peter Farb's assertion that wherever the Whites penetrated, the Indian population suffered drastic declines, and the combined forces of disease, starvation, murder and stress (physical and emotional) produced irreparable

cultural damage.[2]

At some stage in the early colonial period, the Whiteman made a transition from a search for peace and holiness to a quest for material wealth. Carl Becker suggests that it was during this process that the American "progress" ethic was invented.[3] As a direct result, throughout the colonial period Indian rights to land, wildlife and migration were consistently abridged (if recognized at all), terminated or sacrificed to the progress ethic.

Although it was generally accepted that the Indians required civilizing and converting, the early colonial efforts to educate the Indians were neither unified in approach nor successful in outcome.

The missionaries were the most zealous in their educational activities and sought to convince the Indians that their native values, language and heritage were morally wrong and generally unhealthy. When it became "necessary" the Indians were "educated" to recognize the need for them to move from their native lands so that the Whiteman's progress would not be impeded. Indian responses to these approaches varied from passive acceptance to violent resistance such as the attack on the colonial settlements of Virginia in 1622 in which 350 colonists perished.

Not all formal education efforts during the colonial period were imposed, for some individual Indians and tribes sought to acquire education from the Whiteman. Among those requesting assistance the Cherokees and the Choctaws were the most advanced and celebrated. Both

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[2]Ibid., p. 244.

[3]Carl L. Becker, Progress and Power (Stanford: Alfred A. Knopf, 1936).

tribes developed their own school systems, which flourished until government removal policies produced crisis and chaos for the tribes.[4] It is interesting to speculate on what might have been the long range results of these native efforts.

However the net result of over a century of this unco-ordinated educational pattern was negligible in educational terms. The product was more easily accounted for in the increasing suspicion and belligerence of the Indians. Among those who had attended mission schools, most had returned to their native ways and some were genuinely confused.

Other exceptions to the pattern existed and bear mentioning. Among this group are the efforts of John Eliot of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. A student of Indian language, customs and belief, Eliot advocated an integrated approach to teaching the Indians incorporating compassion, demonstration, inquiry and pedagogy. His work among the Indians was supported by the Society for the Propogation of the Gospel, but not necessarily by his fellow residents of the colony. Eliot's work was proving quite successful until the groups with which he was working were massacred. It adds to one's perspective to realize that the colony of Massachusetts was offering about $60 for every Indian scalp at the time.[5]

Also active in educational service to the Indians in the colonial period were Eleazar Wheelock and Samuel Kirkland. Wheelock

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[4]Excellent accounts of the Cherokee and Choctaw education program may be found in: Martha E. Layman, "A History of Indian Education in the United States" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Minnesota, 1942).

[5]Farb, op. cit., p. 124.

founded Moon's Charity School for Indians in Connecticut and later moved to Hanover, New Hampshire, where he established a new school, Dartmouth, which became a forerunner of the non-reservation boarding school.[6]

Kirkland's work among the Indians of central New York won him the respect and trust of the Indians but the suspicion and enmity of the colonists. Hamilton College was the fruition of Kirkland's educational efforts and its charter pledged service to the natives of the area.

The College of William and Mary in Virginia was chartered in 1693 to provide for the education of the children of the colony and to educate and convert the native Indians.[7]

As noted these individual and institutional efforts were more the exception than the rule and their accomplishments must be measured on a local or individual basis. Even when combining these with the general missionary educational activities, one searches in vain for any lasting educational accomplishments among the Indians in the early colonial period.

From the early national period to date both the federal government and various state governments have been involved in Indian affairs. The federal activity has been based on three broad areas of power and responsibility provided by the Constitution of the United States:

1. Article I, section 8, clause 11--reserves for the federal government the power to make war.

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[6]Interesting accounts of Wheelock's work may be located in: Layman, op. cit.; and Harold White Morris, "A History of Indian Education in the United States" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Oregon State College, 1954).

[7]Morris, op. cit.

2. Article II, section 2, clause 2--reserves for the federal government the power to make treaties.

3. Article I, section 8, clause 3--reserves for the federal government the power and responsibility to regulate commerce with Indian tribes.[8]

The years 1794 to 1871 represent the treaty period in Indian affairs and many of the treaties between the federal government and the various tribes made provision for education for the Indians. The first treaty with an educational reference is that of December 2, 1794, with the Oneida, Stockbridge and Tuscarora Tribes of New York.[9]

Actual implementation of these treaty provisions began to appear in Acts of Congress as early as 1802 when an appropriations bill was passed providing a sum not to exceed $15,000 per annum "to promote civilization among the aborigines."[10] The basic foundation of subsequent Indian educational activities is contained in the Act of Congress of March 3, 1819, which states:

> The President may, in every case where he shall judge improvement in the habits and conditions of such Indians practicable, and that the means of instruction can be introduced with their own consent, employ capable persons of good moral character to instruct them in the mode of agriculture suited to their situation; and for teaching their children in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and performing such other duties as may be enjoyed according to such instructions and rules as the President may give and prescribe for the regulation of their conduct, in the discharge of their duties. A report of the proceedings adopted in the execution of this provision shall be annually laid before Congress.[11]

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[8] U. S., Department of Interior, Federal Indian Law, by Elmer F. Bennett (Solicitor), (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1958). This is the authoritative source for laws, federal policy and litigation pertaining to Indian affairs.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Act of March 30, 1802, ibid., p. 143.

[11] Ibid., pp. 272-273. The annual reports are contained in the Annual Reports of The Commission of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The provisions of this bill suggest a more pragmatic view of education than had been practiced by the missionary groups. Morris relates that between 1775 and 1865 Indian schools accorded more and more emphasis on the manual labor skills than on Christian education.[12] One must keep in mind, however, the fact that until the 1870's a majority of Indian schooling was carried out by religious organizations and agencies.[13]

If one is to gain a full appreciation for the Indian reaction to the treaty period (1794-1871), it is necessary to understand two related aspects of the period. The first is the conflict between the European notion of private ownership and the American Indian concept of tribal ownership. The second aspect is the epocal westward expansion of the Whiteman in the 19th century and the concurrent relocation of the Indians, usually on reservations.

The European immigrant brought to North America a tradition of the opportunity for private ownership with specific rights of property. In addition he generally accepted the ethic by which an individual could expand his holdings as a result of diligence and/or entrepreneurship.

The Indian generally viewed himself and his tribes as being in partnership with Nature. He was neither obsessed with control nor with competing against others, but rather sought to achieve a balance among the physical, social and supernatural forces of his

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[12]Morris, op. cit., p. 70.

[13]Blauch indicates that following the 1819 Act, the President sent a circular to church mission societies for advice on how to spend the appropriation. Lloyd E. Blauch, Educational Service for Indians (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939), p. 33.

world.[14] Land provided an identity and a sense of belonging as well as the product from which the Indians gained sustenance. Some land had special tribal or religious significance as well. Given the basic communications problems (i.e., language) it is not difficult to understand why the Indian and the Whiteman rarely understood each other regarding land use and ownership.

It is against this background of basic value conflict and perpetual misunderstanding, that the consistent expansion of the White colonies must be viewed. During the treaty period (1794-1871) the fundamental policy of the federal government regarding Indians was to dispossess the Indians of land to allow for White expansion. Most writers seem to agree that federal educational policy was a function of the land policy. Specific educational goals were first to convince the Indians of the need to give up the land and second to convince the Indians that their future rested upon their transition to a farm-based economy.

Symbolic of the federal efforts to resettle the Indians residing east of the Mississippi River was the Removal Act of 1830. Under the aegis of this law, thousands of Indians suffered from barbaric and inhuman methods of removing them from tribal homelands. Farb indicates that as many as 100,000 Indians may have been subjected to varying degrees of mistreatment during the first half of the 19th century.[15]

A segment of the removal process was observed by Alexis de Tocqueville during his tour of North America in the 1830's and he was very sympathetic to the dilemma of the Indian. He noted:

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[14] Farb, op. cit.

[15] Farb, op. cit.

> From whichever side we consider the destinies of the aboriginies of North America their calamities appear irremediable: if they continue barbarous, they are forced to retire; if they attempt to civilize themselves, the conduct of a more civilized community subject them to oppression and destitution. They perish if they continue to wander from waste to waste, and if they attempt to settle they still must perish. The assistance of Europeans is necessary to instruct them, but the approach of the Europeans corrupts and repels them into savage life. They refuse to change their habits as long as their solitudes are their own and it is too late to change them when at last they are forced to submit.[16]

Tocqueville admired the quality and strength of the Indian cultures and lamented their subjugation by the Whiteman. Even allowing for their stamina, he forecast the extinction of the Indian by the time the Pacific Coast was settled due to a combination of a declining game population, alteration of life-style, conflict among Indians for remaining land, exhaustion and despair.[17]

The end of the Civil War marked the beginning of an era of unparalled expansion in the western United States and with it a new height of suffering and annihilation for the Indians. The Indians suffered from epidemics, broken treaty provisions, wars of desperation, the near extinction of buffalo (the economic base for many western tribes) and the sub-standard conditions of the reservations.

The expansionists and government did encounter some resistance from missionary societies protesting the treatment of the Indians, but "progress" was not to be denied.

Thus prior to 1870 three dominant themes in Indian affairs had been established and were making a significant impact on Indian schooling.

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[16]Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (New York: Vintage Books, 1945), p. 368.

[17]Ibid., p. 353.

First the Indian was viewed as a stubborn, cunning, savage unable to comprehend that his future and salvation were dependent on his embrace of the Whiteman's culture and religion. Secondly, any rights to land that the Indian might have held must yield willingly to progress or be forced under the terms of a conquered enemy. And finally the basic solution to the Indian problems was assimilation and to this end educational efforts were directed.

It is a pity that so many Americans today think of the Indian as a romantic or comic figure in American history without contemporary significance. In fact, the Indian plays the same role in our American society that the Jews played in Germany. Like the miner's canary, the Indian marks the shifts from fresh air to poison gas in our political atmosphere; and our treatment of the Indians even more than our treatment of other minorities, reflects the rise and fall of our democratic faith.

Felix Cohen: Erosion of Indian Rights, 1953

Part II: The Assumption of Federal Responsibility

The decade following the Civil War was devastating for the American Indians as they felt the full impact of westward expansion with the accompanying pressure, greed, and corruption. Several groups were active during the decade campaigning for the elimination of corruption and injustice.

In 1871 one such group, the Citizens Commission, reported to the Congress regarding the multiplying injustices suffered by the Indians. The Commission urged an abandonment of the federal treaty policies, which were lending themselves to extreme forms of graft and corruption on the reservations, and secondly advocated a substantial increase in educational activities for the Indians.[18] President Grant responded by urging an end to the treaty system. His purpose was accomplished by Congress in a declaration attached to an appropriations bill stating: "No Indian nation or tribe within the territory of the United States shall be acknowledged or recognized as an independent

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[18]See Morris, op. cit., for greater detail.

nation, tribe or power with whom the United States may contract by treaty."[19]

By this act of Congress the legal status of the Indian was reduced to that of a ward or prisoner of the federal government (citizenship was not extended to all Indians until 1924), a status which was contrary to previous interpretations of the Constitution and treaties in force. It was, however, consistent with the expansionist policies of the Jacksonian adherents and reduced the legal resistance to those advocating extermination of the Indians by the military.

Thus by a stroke of the pen the federal government became the primary custodian of all Indian affairs. The century of federal government activity which followed is punctuated by bitter policy debates, by alternating periods of hope and despair for the Indians, and by the failure of formal educational efforts the federal government provided for the Indians.

The dominant thrust of federal Indian policy between 1870 and 1970 was that of coercive assimilation. Interpreted operationally this policy has ranged from reservation dictatorships (by federal agents) to the transfer of Indian children from their homes to boarding schools and foster homes for periods up to eight to ten years.

The federal educational policies have largely been corollaries of broader federal policies regarding assimilation, land, and natural resources. Genuine concern for the futures of Indian children and an acknowledgment of the debilitating problems of the federal Indian educational system have been limited to two brief periods in the

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[19]Act of Congress of March 3, 1871. An explanation of the act and its manifold legal implications is contained in Bennett, op. cit., pp. 210-212.

century (1934-1944 and 1965-1970).

The most time consuming problem for federal Indian policymakers in the century has been the need to acquire lands (for public and private development) that were previously claimed and/or occupied by Indians, without obligating the government to long term treaty commitments or expensive short term settlements. Toward a solution to this problem two major schemes were devised and enacted by Congress: the Dawes Act of 1887; and the House Concurrent Resolution 108 of 1953.

The operative sections of the Dawes Act provided for an allotment of 160 acres to each family head and rights of citizenship in exchange for the abandonment of tribal life and property claims. It is estimated that between 1887 and 1935 Indians lost through the allotment process 90,000,000 acres of the most valuable farm and forest land in the West. The process of educating the Indian to the desirability of the allotment program was indeed an educational challenge, but the "success" was based on a combination of misrepresentation, chicanery and coersion.[20]

House Concurrent Resolution 108 was the culmination of a decade of activity by those who were convinced of the need for the federal government to terminate its obligations and responsibilities for Indian affairs. Under the terms of the resolution, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was to begin at once the process of disengagement and, where necessary, transfer specific responsibilities to state agencies where the Indians resided. Although the termination process was halted in the early 1960's, some tribes were well along in the disastrous process and their experience provides for the continuing

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[20]Excellent explanations of the Dawes Act and its long range effects appear in: Farb, op. cit.; and Howard Fey and D'Arcy McNickle, Indians and Other Americans (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959).

fear among Indians that a resumption of the process could begin at any time.[21]

During the termination period the educational process was again utilized in an attempt to convince the Indians of the wisdom of surrendering their claims to obligations of the federal government, many of which were encased in treaties and agreements guaranteeing benefits to the Indians "in perpetuity."

Although it is apparent that the federal policies have failed to accomplish the goal of assimilation, that is not to assert that the cultures of the contemporary Indians are comparable to those prior to the arrival of the Whiteman. Peter Farb argues with considerable force that "to all intents and purposes the Indian civilization disappeared early in the twentieth century"[22] and that most Indians exist today as a conquered people in cultural limbo. Farb's summary is, I think, especially comprehensive:

> The victory over the Bloodthirsty Savage—reduced in numbers, deprived of lands, broken in spirit, isolated on wasteland reservations--was complete except for one final indignity. That was to Americanize the Indian, to eliminate his last faint recollection of his ancient traditions—in short, to exterminate the cultures along with the Indians.[23]

To grasp the impact of this conquering process it is essential to review the methods by which the federal government and its designees have attempted to formally educate the Indians from 1870 to 1970.

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[21] A particularly well-documented account of the development and application of termination policy appears in William A. Brophy and Sophie D. Aberle, The Indian (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966).

[22] Farb, op. cit., p. 259.

[23] Ibid.

Although the federal government assumed full responsibility for Indian affairs in 1871, it had no apparatus to deal with many of the aspects of that responsibility. The government was especially lacking in the educational area and thus delegated most of the responsibilities for education and associated activities to the various religious denominations active in Indian mission work. The arrangement was a failure, resulting in suffering for the Indians from the unrestrained zeal of missionary dictators, general suppression of their rights and liberties and frequent punishment for attempts to perpetuate their Indian heritage.[24]

A final break with the missionary school system did not come until 1897, but by the mid 1870's the BIA was building its own educational system. The BIA system was based primarily on the model developed by General R. H. Pratt utilizing military personnel, military posts (abandoned or retired) and a good bit of military philosophy. General Pratt as the founder and longtime director of the Carlisle Indian School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, achieved great public acclaim and apparent success. The operation of the off-reservation boarding school was designed to provide training for the Indian's emergence into the White culture.[25]

The curriculum at the Carlisle School was a combination of academic and manual training with an annual "outing" or home visit with a model family, usually occuring during the summer.

The Carlisle School was indeed the model for the developing

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[24]Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Indian Heritage of America (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), pp. 339-342.

[25]General (Ret.) Richard Henry Pratt, Battlefield and Classroom (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964).

federal system proving to be the most dominant and popular federal educational approach until 1928.[26]

The Indian boarding school in theory and practice is a direct application of coercive assimilation. The children were extracted from their homes as early as eight years old—some not to return for eight to ten years—and were thrust into a foreign and impersonal environment to "learn" a new way of life.

The personnel of the schools were poorly trained, improperly equipped, and often direct from military service. They had little or no respect or knowledge of the Indian language and heritage. In fact the children were generally punished for speaking their native tongue or participating in native customs. It is of little wonder that the adult Indians were not only suspicious and resentful of the system but often refused to allow their children to be taken to boarding school. Such actions often resulted in some form of retaliation by the government agents who were apparently supported from Washington.[27]

The results of the boarding school system are reflected in the subsequent economic and social conditions of American Indians, which generally may be described by such terms as disappointment, disillusionment and despair.

In a classic study of the Navaho tribes, Kluckhohn and

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[26]Although the Carlisle School has been closed (and returned to military status) several similar schools remain in operation: Haskell Indian School, Kansas; Chemawa Indian School, Oregon; Chilocco Indian School, Oklahoma; Alburquerque Indian School, New Mexico; and Stewart Indian School, Nevada.

[27]An example of Washington's support may be found in the Congressional Act of 1893 granting power to the Secretary of Interior to withhold food from families refusing to allow children to attend school. See Bennett, op. cit.

Leighton summarized their analysis of the boarding school system as follows:

> The policy was really to go behind the existing social organization in order to dissolve it. No effort was made to prepare them for dealing effectively with Reservation conditions. Yet more than 95 per cent of the Navaho children went home, rather than to white communities, after leaving school, only to find themselves handicapped for taking part in Navaho life because they did not know the techniques and customs of their own people.[28]

The failure of the federal boarding school system has been and continues to be reflected in the economic, social and psychological problems on the reservations.

For those children who attended boarding schools operated by the denominational missions, there was the added burden of conversion to the faith and often the insistence that the children proselytize on their return to the reservation. In other aspects the denominational boarding school is directly comparable to those operated by the federal government.

An interesting perspective regarding the denominational boarding schools may be derived from a comparison of studies by Buck[29] and King.[30] Buck in tracing the history of the educational activities of the Presbyterian Missions in New Mexico was most supportive of the missions' efforts. Buck's writing reflects the strong current of conversion permeating the mission educational programs and indicates that there was constant competition with Roman Catholic missions in

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[28]Clyde Kluckhohn and Dorothea Leighton, The Navaho (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 141.

[29]Lucius Edman Buck, "An Inquiry into the History of Presbyterian Educational Missions in New Mexico" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Southern California, 1949).

[30]Alfred Richard King, The School at Mopass: A Problem of Identity (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967).

the territory. One could conclude from Buck's study that more denominational resources and energies were spent on conversion and inter-denominational strife than was spent in concern or action for educational purposes.

Buck also places considerable emphasis on physical facilities and the financial aspects of the mission schools, while very little treatment is given to the school environment and interaction with the children. Educational goals are not mentioned nor is educational achievement measured other than in attendance figures. However, he does give evidence of being very sympathetic with the teaching staff of the schools as he states: "These teachers were compelled in the prosecution of their work to invade a foreign-speaking community and overcome many prejudices."[31] I cannot help but conclude that the choice of such words as "invade," "prosecution" and "overcome" are reflective of a basic and pervasive attitude which has made the denominational boarding-school experience a nightmare for many Indian children.

Although King's study is based on his experience in an Anglican boarding school in the Yukon Territory of Canada, it is of high significance for the emphasis he places on the children and their educational experiences as well as his critical analysis of the role of a denominational school in the educational experience of a captive people. His description of the conditions of the boarding school in his study parallel, to such a degree, descriptions of boarding schools in the United States that I am assuming that his generalizations are pertinent and transferable.

King found through testing and interviewing the children at

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[31]Buck, op. cit., p. 48.

Mopass that the environment of the school was limiting their learning range and modifying their behavior in such a way that the children when presented with an alternative invariably selected the alternative which offered the least risk and lowest potential punishment. If no alternative was presented, the children would, in effect, create one by remaining silent or non-commital. King found this pattern to be a pragmatic form of gamesmanship which developed from a system of authoritarianism based upon the whims and personal demands of the school staff.

Under the system in operation at Mopass the children appear as non-individuals in a group that is subordinate to time scheduling, supply problems and everpresent forms to be filled out. There is precious little time for any of the children unless it is to mete out punishment. The children arise, eat, play, learn, worship, and sleep according to the obsessive commands of the staff, to which the children soon develop a set of defenses and assumptions that provide a potential for a multitude of social, personal and educational problems. In sum, King asserts that the environment of the boarding school creates an identity crisis for the children resulting in behavioral changes and/or serious individual problems.

Furthermore, King finds the school deficient in its treatment of Indian heritage, in its communication and relationship with parents, and in its general ignorance about the Indian children it purports to serve. His indictment of the staff is worth quoting:

> The church-employed staff constitute the power structure and the ideological ethos of the school. Their identity, their first loyalty, their source of authority and of status are church-derived; and their primary purpose (aside from self-interest) is the continuity of their church by means of the indoctrination of

Indian children in the adult belief system.[32]

Thus the available evidence supports the conclusion that the boarding school systems operated by both the federal government and denominational missions failed to meet the needs of the children enrolled and failed to achieve the assimilation for which the schools were designed. There is in fact evidence to suggest that the boarding schools were major contributors to the social, economic and personal problems of the inhabitants of the reservations.

Although the boarding school was the predominate mode in Indian education from 1878 to 1928, the BIA as early as 1890 was involved in the support of reservation day schools. Eventually a system of federal day schools developed with its own breed of problems and failures.

The day schools have been handicapped from their inception by the scattered residence patterns of the reservations and the failure of reservation highway development to be co-ordinated with school planning. Thus some children have been expected to travel 50 miles or more one way to attend school. Harsh winters, bad roads, unpredictable transportation and assorted other factors have invariably assured that the attendance of Indian children in the day schools would be irregular at best.

Since the most active period for the establishment of reservations and the development of the educational systems occurred in the last half of the 19th century, there was a ready supply of manpower from the military following the Civil and Indian Wars. The reservations rapidly became staffed by ex-soldiers who saw in rigid

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[32]King, op. cit., p. 57.

military discipline the answer to handling Indian problems. The day schools inherited their share of ex-military personnel and the schools rapidly developed a para-military atmosphere.

Although most Indian children knew very little English (the staff even less of the Indian languages), the total school program was conducted in English. In fact, the children were punished for speaking their native tongue on school property. The children were expected to live at home while being taught that their Indian heritage was immoral and should be discarded. The results were, predictably, identity problems for the children, poor schooling, increased resentment among the parents, and additional factors in attendance irregularity.

The staff of the day schools were generally poorly trained, ignorant of Indian language and cultures, and convinced that the children were products of a lazy, stubborn, stupid, and savage race.

Throughout the century (1870-1970) varying numbers of Indian children have lived close enough to attend local public schools. In these schools the children encountered various forms of discrimination, programs that failed to meet their needs, teachers who expected them to fail and curricula that portrayed the American Indian in derogatory and often historically inaccurate terms.[33]

The educational programming for Indians remained static from 1890 to approximately 1934, while problems for the Indians mounted to crisis proportions.[34]

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[33]A comprehensive study of the historical problems of Indian children attending federal and public day schools occurs in: U.S. Congress, Senate, 1969 Report of the Special Subcommittee on Indian Education, S. Report No. 91-501, 91st Cong., 2nd Session, November 3, 1969.

[34]Fey and McNickle, op. cit., p. 115, report that in 1933 the

In response to the reports of disaster, corruption, exploitation and mismanagement on the Indian reservations, several national groups and organizations commissioned studies of the Indian problems during the late 1920's. The Brookings Institution in Washington authorized Lewis Meriam to conduct a study, which was completed and published in 1928.[35] The report found few areas to praise in Indian affairs and offered major indictments against the exclusion of Indians from the management of their own affairs and the poor quality of services provided the Indians, especially in health and education.

Meriam's Report asserted that a change in attitude was essential to any improvement of service and suggested that:

> The surest way to achieve the change in point of view is to raise the qualifications of teachers and other employees. After all is said that can be said about the skill and devotion of some employees, the fact remains that the Government of the United States regularly takes into its instructional staff of its Indian schools teachers whose credentials would not be accepted in good public school systems.[36]

The Meriam Report gained national attention and formed the basis of reform legislation that called for a major change in the operating philosophy in Indian affairs.

The report also provided the stimulus for a reordering of educational priorities and a reform of practices. The report was especially critical of the lack of material in the schools that was relevant to Indian children, of the failure of the schools to adapt to the native languages of the children, and of the consistent neglect

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reservation conditions were serious enough to merit emergency relief from the War Department and the American Red Cross.

[35] Lewis Meriam, The Problem of Indian Administration (Baltimore: The JohnsHopkins Press, 1928).

[36] Ibid., p. 346.

of the adult community in school planning and activities. The report also condemned the boarding school system as inadequate, unhealthy and unproductive and called for the elimination of the system.

In the years following the Meriam Report, Franklin Roosevelt was elected President and a Congressional majority with unusual social concern produced a flurry of social legislation. Under the encouragement and support of a sympathetic Secretary of Interior, (Ickles), John Collier as Commissioner of Indian Affairs (1933-1945) brought about sweeping changes in the staff, operations and goals of the BIA.

Under administrative leadership from the BIA, Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (Wheeler-Howard Act) putting an end to the allotment system, providing an increased role for Indians in the management of their own affairs, and provisions for increased civil and cultural freedom for Indians. It is of significance that many tribal leaders took an active part in the drafting of the bill.[37]

Congress also passed the Johnson-O'Malley Act in 1934 authorizing federal contracts with states and other political units for the purpose of improving Indian education and welfare programs. Since its passage this act has been the basis of federal support to public schools involved in the education of Indian children.

Under Collier's leadership the BIA school system initiated the use of some bilingual programs, increased the recruitment and training

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[37]A more detailed account of the provisions and implications of the act may be found in: Evelyn Crady Adams, American Indian Education (New York: King's Crown Press, 1946), pp. 75-78; Brophy and Aberle, op. cit., p. 20ff; and John Collier, From Every Zenith: A Memoir (Denver: Sage Books, 1963).

of Indian teachers, increased activity in adult education, and began the regular inclusion of Indian heritage in the school curricula. From 1933 to 1943 the BIA closed sixteen of its boarding schools decreasing the percentage of Indian children in boarding schools from three-fourths to one-third. During the same period the BIA added eighty-four day schools to its system and in 1943 two-thirds of the Indian children in school were attending day schools.[38]

As a result of an apparent change in Washington's attitude and recognizable improvements on the reservations, many Indians began cautiously to hope that for the first time since the arrival of the Whiteman that their was some promise of co-existence.

A combination of a decrease in public interest, the increased costs of World War II, and a coalition of public and private interests gradually undermined and eventually reversed the spirit and substance of a majority of the policies enacted from 1934 to 1944. Indian hopes were transformed into cynicism and despair. The most serious blow occurred when a majority of Congress demonstrated that its primary interest in Indian affairs (reduction of federal costs and elimination of federal obligations) in the adoption of House Concurrent Resolution 108 and its commitment to termination.

From 1944 on the Meriam-Collier approach encountered opposition of both an operational and philosophical nature. With the appointment of Dillon S. Meyer as Commissioner of Indian Affairs[39] in 1950, the Meriam-Collier approach was shelved and most of the BIA

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[38]Senate Report, op. cit., pp. 155-156.

[39]Meyer had previously worked in the War Relocation and Housing authority and was the federal co-ordinator of Japanese detention camps during World War II.

personnel sympathetic to that approach were transferred or forced to resign. Under Meyer's administration the object was nothing short of de-Indianizing the Indians—schools were closed, a new surge in boarding school activity occurred and a renewed authoritarian paternalism prevailed.

Felix Cohen had served with distinction as the Solicitor for the BIA for over twenty years, but found the Meyer approach intolerable and resigned. In an article for the Yale Law Review Journal, following his resignation, Cohen charged that under Meyer's sponsorship the BIA was actively involved in the abridgement of Indian rights and liberties, general harassment of Indian leadership, and increasing restrictions on Indian control of Indian property.[40] This article cited actual cases to substantiate Cohen's charges and provides an indication of the extent to which the BIA was involved in enforcing its new mandate.

Cohen's article when combined with other representative works of the 1950's provides ample evidence to understand why some writers now suggest that many American Indians suffer from "Termination Psychosis," a basic and all pervading suspicion of government motives with regard to new programs and policies.[41]

From 1953 to 1965 the situation for Indians remained static as they grew increasingly suspicious and resentful with economic and social conditions on the reservations seriously deteriorated. Although the Secretary of the Interior called a halt to forced termination in

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[40]Felix S. Cohen, "Erosion of Indian Rights," Yale Law Review Journal, February, 1953, pp. 348-390.

[41]Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The American Indian and the Bureau of Indian Affairs--1969. A study prepared for the White House and cited frequently in the Senate Report, op. cit.

1958, the legislation remains on the books and as far as the Indians are concerned that means that a continuation of termination could occur over night.

During this period (1953 to 1965) two important documents emerged and both paid significant attention to the problems and inadequacies of federal Indian educational programming. The first to appear (1961) was the Report for the Commission on Rights, Liberties, and Responsibilities of the American Indian.[42] This report is well documented and contains a clear description of the failures and inadequacies of public and federal educational programs for Indians.

The second report was the result of a two week conference at the University of Chicago in June, 1961, attended by some 420 Indian leaders of 67 tribes. The conference produced a document entitled "A Declaration of Indian Purpose" which called for a complete reorganization of the BIA with Indians playing a major role in determining the new plan.[43] In addition to the substance of the report, it is important as evidence of the ability of contemporary Indian leadership to organize and arrive at a consensus regarding the future status of their people. For if one is to have any substantial hope for an improved future for American Indians, this leadership is vital.

In 1965, Congress produced a bumper crop of ameliorative social and educational legislation including the Economic Opportunity Act and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Although Indians were not the chief target group of the legislation, they did derive

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[42]This report was lated updated and published by Brophy and Aberle, op. cit.

[43]"Declaration of Indian Purpose," American Indian Chicago Conference, held at the University of Chicago, June, 1961.

some benefits from the acts.

From the Economic Opportunity Act Indian children have gained the benefits of Head Start programs (in 1968 10,000 Indian children were enrolled in Head Start) and their parents gained an unusual opportunity to participate in the development and control of the program. Indian youths gained additional educational and occupational opportunities through Upward Bound and Job Corps programs. VISTA volunteers stationed on reservations have been willing participants with Indians in improving various reservation services.

Perhaps the most important outcome of the new legislation was the development of Community Action Programs (CAP's) on reservations demonstrating the viability of Indian initiative and imagination in confronting reservation problems. The Rough Rock Demonstration School on the Navaho Reservation in Arizona is the most visible success of CAP's, but more successes are expected due to the fact that in 1969 there were more than 60 CAP's involving 105 reservations in 17 states.[44]

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act established the priority and policy to accord the disadvantaged youth of the nation an effective education. An amendment in 1966 specifically incorporated the educational programs of the BIA and resulted in an appropriation of five million dollars in 1968 and nine million dollars in 1969 for federal Indian education programs. If these increased allocations have been spent at the local level and not swallowed up by increased bureaucratic administration costs, the Indian programs should by

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[44]A more detailed account of the Economic Opportunity Act and its short term impact may be found in the Senate Report, op. cit., pp. 176-178.

now be showing their effects.

The new legislation has offered Indians concerned about education some increased hope, but most remain skeptical and insecure. When viewed against the enormity of Indian problems, the recent gains have been minimal. Perhaps a review and analysis of the century of federal management of Indian education will highlight the basis for present Indian attitudes and summarize the results of federal management.

As a primary source of this review I have relied heavily on the findings of the Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education. The subcommittee's work, which was begun in 1967 and completed in 1969, is both critical and comprehensive and represents the most up-to-date analysis of the status of the federal Indian school system. The final report of the subcommittee "Indian Education: A National Tragedy--A National Challenge"[45] is a distillate of seven volumes of hearings and five volumes of committee prints, which contain a wealth of information about Indian Education past and present.

In summarizing its historical findings, the subcommittee asserts that the dominant policy of the federal government in Indian affairs has been one of coersive assimilation resulting in:

A. The destruction and disorganization of Indian communities and individuals.

B. A desperately severe and self-perpetuating cycle of poverty for most Indians.

C. The growth of a large, ineffective and self-perpetuating bureaucracy which retards the elimination of Indian poverty.

D. A waste of federal appropriations.[46]

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[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid., p. 21.

The general policy of coercive assimilation was found to have a strong negative influence on national attitudes which are reflected in:

A. A nation that is massively uninformed and misinformed about the American Indian, his past and present.

B. Prejudice, racial intolerance, and discrimination towards Indians far more serious and widespread than generally recognized.[47]

As reflected in educational policy and classroom atmosphere the basic policy of coercive assimilation has had disastrous effects on Indian children resulting in:

A. The classroom and school becoming a kind of battleground where the Indian child attempts to protect his integrity and identity as an individual by defeating the purposes of the school.

B. Schools which fail to understand or adapt to, and in fact often denigrate, cultural differences.

C. Schools which blame their own failures on the Indian student and reinforce his defensiveness.

D. Schools which fail to recognize the importance and validity of the Indian community. The community and child retaliate by treating the school as an alien institution.

E. A dismal record of absenteeism, dropouts, negative self-images, low achievement, and, ultimately, academic failure for many Indian children.

F. A perpetuation of the cycle of poverty which undermines the success of all other federal programs.[48]

In exploring the historical and philosophical roots of the assimilation policy the subcommittee identified two major sources:

A. A continuous desire to exploit, and expropriate Indian land and physical resources.

B. A self-righteous intolerance of tribal communities and cultural differences.[49]

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[47] Ibid. [48] Ibid. [49] Ibid.

Thus the record of federal management of Indian education from 1870 to 1970 has been charted, its path consistently damaging and depressing, and finally leading to the inescapable conclusion that the federal efforts have failed by any standard of measurement or comparison.

In casting about for hopeful signs or trends for an improved future one finds only an emerging indigenous leadership group and a few community based school programs catering to local needs. In view of the past record, these factors seem relatively powerless when compared to the strength, resources, and tenacity of the federal bureaucracy and the historical need of the Whiteman to dominate and eliminate cultural minorities.

> The unfulfilled dream of the Indians of this country is that they will be permitted at last to make the primary decisions affecting their lives and their property. Not that their decisions will be superior to those made by men possibly more skillful, but that being their decisions, the people will be content to live with them and to change them as experience teaches the desirability of change.
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> Fey and McNickle:
> Indians and Other Americans, 1959

Part III: The Contemporary Situation—1970

In reviewing the contemporary literature regarding Indian education one finds dominate the themes of confusion, disillusionment and failure. A glance at current Indian statistics brings to focus the future challenge for those who hope to assist the American Indians in achieving the educational success that has to date been so elusive.

The census of 1970 is expected to indicate an American Indian population of approximately 600,000, thus designating them as the most rapidly growing minority in the United States. Indians presently reside in all fifty states, speak 300 separate languages and about two-thirds of the population resides on a recognized reservation.

In 1968 the average Indian income was $1500 (about one-fourth the national average), the unemployment rate was forty per cent (about ten times the national average) and the life expectancy of an Indian was forty-four (the national average sixty-five). The infant mortality rate for Indians was twice the national average.

There were 152,088 Indian children between the ages of 6 and 18 of which 142,630 were attending one type of school or another. Some 6,616 school-age Indian children were not enrolled in school and the status of 2,842 was totally unknown.

In 1968 the BIA was operating 77 boarding schools and 147 day schools accomodating a combined total of 51,448 children. Of special significance is the fact that nearly 9,000 of the boarding school children were under 9 years old.

Also according to 1968 statistics, the average educational level (school years completed) for all Indians under federal supervision was five years with more than one of every five Indians having less than the average. The dropout rates for Indian students were twice the national average. Of those who complete federal Indian school programs only eighteen per cent went to college (the national average was fifty per cent) with only one per cent of Indian college graduates achieving a master's degree.

The BIA in 1968 was spending $18 per year per child on textbooks and supplies while the national average was $40.[50]

The 1969 Senate Report cited an interesting case study. In 1953 the BIA initiated a crash program to upgrade the educational program for Navaho children. Between 1953 and 1967, supervisory positions at BIA headquarters increased 113 per cent; supervisory positions in BIA schools increased 144 per cent; administrative and clerical positions in BIA schools increased 94 per cent. However teaching positions increased only 20 per cent.[51]

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[50] All statistics obtained from the Senate Report, op. cit.

[51] Ibid., p. xiii.

In 1966 the President issued a directive to provide elective school boards for all BIA schools. By 1968 only one such board was in existence out of 226 BIA schools.

The statistics are overwhelming, the bureaucracy seemingly immovable and the problems for Indians multiplying at a greater rate than their population. After a most extensive survey of literature pertaining to American Indian education, Dr. Brewton Berry concluded that the Indians and most educators are in agreement that the schools are continuing in their failure to meet the needs of the Indian children.[52] Few, if any, would disagree with Dr. Berry's conclusion, but there are widely divergent views regarding the causes and problems that he describes.

Many of the early investigators of problems in Indian education were very comfortable in concluding that the Indians were deficient in native intelligence, thus accounting for their poor educational record. These theories were rather widely accepted and persist today in the folklore about Indians even though by 1930 the theories had been scientifically discounted. Havighurst summarized the clarifying research in stating:

> The conclusion which is drawn by most social scientists from data on Indian cultures and Indian intelligence is that American Indians of today have about the same innate equipment for learning as have the white children of America.[53]

There remains the challenge to combat the folklore among

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[52]U.S., Office of Education, Department of Research, The Education of American Indians: A Survey of the Literature, by Brewton Berry (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University, 1968).

[53]Robert J. Havighurst, "Education Among American Indians: Individual and Cultural Aspects," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CCCXI (May, 1957), pp. 105-115.

laymen and teachers and to rebuild the self-image of Indian children affected by the misinformed.

The Meriam Report in 1928 was critical of the failure of the BIA to utilize any of the most basic systems of achievement measurement in the Indian schools. This criticism set off a flurry of activity to develop data on the achievement patterns of Indian students and in the 1940's the BIA contracted with the University of Chicago for the first system-wide analysis of achievement in the Indian schools. The results of this analysis are summarized in a monograph by Peterson which found the achievement levels low, but also left many questions unanswered.[54]

A subsequent and more comprehensive study by Coombs[55] found Indian students ranking very low in achievement when compared to white students. Among the students tested in this study, the following hierarchy appeared:

1. White pupils in public schools
2. Indian pupils in public schools
3. Indian pupils in federal schools, and
4. Indian pupils in mission schools.

Research attempting to identify the cause or causes of educational failure among Indian students is voluminous and much of it contradictory.

Some have cited isolation as a root cause of the failure.

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[54]U.S., Department of Interior, U.S. Indian Service, How Well Are Indian Children Educated, by Shailer A. Peterson (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1948).

[55]U.S., Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, The Indian Goes to School, by Madison L. Coombs, et al. (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1958).

One of the more recent and well-documented studies in 1964 concludes:

> Isolation—lack of communication, social distance—is the cardinal factor in the problem of Indian education on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Because the isolation affects so many contexts—the community as a whole, the school within the community, the pupil within the classroom, and the teacher within the educational system—its effect is greatly intensified. The Sioux community is isolated from the mainstream of national life and isolated especially from the current where literacy and education are important and common.[56]

The authors of this study are also convinced that the isolation of the Indian reservation is similar in effect to the isolation of the urban ghetto. They draw parallels between the ghetto and the reservation in terms of low scholastic achievement, high dropout rate, peer loyalty of children, and teacher attitudes. On the basis of these comparisons the authors agree that there is an identifiable national educational problem which need not be made further complex by attacking ethnic or racial idiosyncrasies.

Other studies cite Indian alienation from the White,[57] and many argue for a multiplicity of causes. Berry provides a substantial case for the following causal areas:

A. The Question of Indian intelligence
B. Teacher-related problems and attitudes
C. Parent-related problems and attitudes
D. The Question of Cultural deprivation
E. The cultural barriers between Red and White
F. Language barriers and problems
G. General school-related problems
H. The Indians self-concept.[58]

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[56] Murray L. Wax, Rosalie H. Wax and Robert V. Dumont, Jr., Formal Education in an American Indian Community (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Society for the Study of Social Problems, 1964; also issued as a supplement to Social Problems, Vol. II, No. 4, Spring, 1964).

[57] J. F. and S. J. Bryde, The Sioux Indian Student: A Study of Scholastic Failure and Personality Conflict (a Ph.D. thesis, University of Denver, 1965).

[58] Berry, Op. cit., pp. 43-99

For each causal area Berry provides the major arguments, descriptions of problems, and citations to supporting research. His case is convincing and his documentation exhaustive.

In many areas the Indians have been researched ad nauseum, but there are some that presently need updating and others (i.e., contemporary Indian self-concepts and teacher attitudes among teachers of Indian children) that should receive thorough research treatment. However, it is difficult to argue with those Indians who, like Vine Deloria, Jr.,[59] suggest that the Indians have to cease being exploited by research that benefits the researcher, but never results in action that provides assistance to the Indians studied.

An action-oriented experiment of the type advocated by Deloria has been in operation on the Navaho Reservation in Arizona since the latter part of 1966. The Rough Rock Demonstration School is an independent school administered by an all Indian, locally elected, board and funded through the co-operation of the Office of Economic Opportunity and the BIA.

The Rough Rock School Community has a population of approximately 600, of which about ninety are school staff members and more than half of them are Indian. The curriculum for the school is designed by the board and staff with components to serve all age groups in the community. Of special note are daily lessons in Indian heritage, the teaching of English as a second language (generally referred to as TESL) and an adult arts and crafts program.[60]

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[59] Vine Deloria, Jr., Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1969), Chapter 4, "Anthropologists and Other Friends."

[60] Additional information regarding the school at Rough Rock may be located in: Paul Conklin, "Good Day at Rough Rock," American Education III (February, 1967), pp. 4-9; and Robert A. Roessel, Jr. "An Overview of the Rough Rock Demonstration School," Journal of American Indian Education, Vol. VII, No. 3 (May, 1968), pp. 2-41.

In its first three years of operation the Rough Rock School proved highly successful on a local level and served as a model for the development of other community-centered schools. Its significance lies in the use of local control with external financial assistance, the use of TESL programs, the emphasis on meeting community based needs, and its potential impact on the development of healthy personal and community attitudes.

Although there are encouraging experiments such as Rough Rock, we should not be deluded into thinking that the contemporary situation in Indian education is improving rapidly nor should we necessarily assume that the future may hold better opportunities for Indian students. The recent Senate study found both public and federal schools deficient in their attitudes toward Indian children, insufficient in staff and facilities to meet identified needs, lacking in parental participation, and generally inadequately prepared for the challenge.[61] It would appear to be a safe bet that the future will be more of the same for most Indian children unless radical changes occur at both the national and local levels.

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[61]Senate Report, op. cit., pp. 52-54 and pp. 99-104.

Part IV: Observations and Conclusions

The array of problems facing contemporary American Indians is overwhelming. If one is to understand the plight of the Indians, it is necessary to be aware of the multiplicity of problems and the complexity of the interrelationships which bind them and resist simple or short-term solutions. An Indian child today faces a future of poor health, insecure identity, chronic unemployment, persistent discrimination, lack of political and social self-determination and an inferior education.

Since 1871 the United States Government has assumed full responsibility for the welfare of American Indians. During the past 100 years, federal Indian policy has been based largely on the effort to deprive the Indians of land, confine the Indians on reservations, indoctrinate them into the White-Christian culture and relieve the government of any long-term obligations or responsibilities.

The educational policies of the federal government have been, to a great extent, corollaries of these broader federal policies and their combined application has produced devastating effects on the American Indians and their cultures. In the process Indians have experienced the erosion of once flourishing cultures, the deadly effects of uprooting and transformation of life-style, and the continuing disillusionment from a dominating paternalism and unkept promises. In sum, the federal government has failed to meet the responsibilities imposed on itself by treaty, legislation and mutual

agreement with the Indians and failed to uphold the obligations imposed on it by the Constitution.

In 1970 the American Indians remain a dominated minority, experiencing exploitation and discrimination that are relatively unchecked due to the lack of Indian political and economic power. For the Whiteman, however, the Indians continue to be a problem because:

1. Indians continue to offer resistance to the usurpation and exploitation of Indian lands.

2. Indians continue to resist the total adoption of the White-Christian culture.

3. Indians persist in their refusal to totally embrace the American economic dream and its promises of success.

4. Indians expect the federal and state governments to meet their responsibilities and obligations under treaties and other agreements.

5. Indians have endured the humiliation of defeat, the ravages of hunger and disease, and numerous attempts of cultural and human extermination yet they have maintained a measure of strength and dignity not easily matched in the history of mankind.

Perhaps in a way the Indian is a threat to the Whiteman because he represents in this strength and dignity qualities that have proved elusive to the Whiteman. If so, the first educational priority might well become that of educating the Whiteman.

As a nation, we have seemed obsessed, in the past two decades, in dealing with the needs and demands of minority groups in an isolated problem-oriented manner. Some of these attempts have achieved various levels of success and others have failed violently. Yet the nation has apparently escaped facing squarely the question of whether it remains committed to equal protection and opportunity under the law of the land. Until that question is unequivocally answered, the

American Indians will not know the real nature of their future or whether they must surrender their heritage as a precondition to realizing the full citizenship guaranteed them in 1924.

In addition, American Indians need to gain economic, political and educational footholds. The recent actions and proposals by the Nixon administration would appear to offer some promise in these areas. However, President Nixon is yet to demonstrate his ability to gain the enactment of positive measures by Congress. In his statement of July 8, 1970,[62] the President requested a repudiation and repeal of termination policies, increased Indian self-determination (especially in education), increased economic and health assistance, and the establishment of an independent agency to assist Indians in the protection of land and water rights. The enactment of these proposals could be helpful to the establishment of Indian footholds for the future.

The Senate Special Subcommittee on Indian Education in its hearings and deliberations from 1967 to 1969 dramatized for the nation the urgent needs of American Indians. The recommendations of the subcommittee, although neither very imaginative nor original, would be of assistance to Indians if enacted by Congress and practiced by the BIA.

The real hope for the Indians in the future rests with the development of articulate and dynamic leadership that will sustain organizations and campaigns dedicated to self-determination for their people. The development of economic and political power is the sine qua non of change in the American system.

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[62]"Excerpts from Nixon's message on Indian affairs," New York Times, July 9, 1970, p. 18:4.

The educational programs of the federal government from 1870 to 1970 may be traced directly to the early colonial efforts to "civilize and Christianize" the savages and subsequent designs to "assimilate and democratize" the stubborn Indians. In view of the frequency and intensity of these efforts, both public and private, to de-Indianize the Indians, it is miraculous that any survive at all. The fact that they do survive is testimony to the incredible tenacity and uncommon fortitude of the Indians.

It is axiomatic that during the past four centuries the Indians have learned much <u>about</u> the Whiteman, it is, however, mere conjecture how much of value the Indians have learned <u>from</u> the Whiteman. One suspects that if the immigrants to North America expended as much effort learning as they did teaching, the fabric of the American democracy would be more resilient than it appears to be in 1970.

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